

Meeting Minutes

Biodiesel Commission July 31, 2007

Members Present:

Rep. David Borden
Melinda Treadwell
Richard Uncles
Rep. Suzanne Harvey
Rep. Richard Barry

Dorn Cox
Scott Bryer
Tim Hickey
Becky Ohler
Sen. Jack Barnes

Others:

Sen. Martha Fuller Clark
Rep. Ricia McMahon
Adam Schmidt
Joel Anderson

Gina Rotondi
Chris Kennedy
Carolyn Demorest

Rep. Borden called the first meeting of the commission to order at 1:00 PM in Room 304 of the LOB. During introductions, members and other stakeholders identified their affiliations and concerns about biodiesel in New Hampshire and what issues might be included in legislation. Members voted Rep. Borden as chair and Rep. Harvey as clerk.

Among the comments made:

Dorn Cox is working with UNH on a sunflower project and hopes for a 100 gal/acre yield.

Tim Hickey of Atlantic Biodiesel, a startup organization, is concerned about the NH tax levied on biodiesels yet not on regular petroleum. He added that we need incentives such as a tax credit to producers. His company is planning an initial 3 million gallon capacity, with an additional 6 million annually within 90 days of startup.

Rep. Harvey expressed interest in all renewable and clean energy forms and was a co-sponsor of the bill that created the commission. She is interested in educating the public about biodiesel.

Rep. Dick Barry said he's interested in how biodiesel fits into the energy scheme and what it will cost.

Rep. Borden, a consumer of biodiesel, wonders if NH has enough farmland to make biodiesel a NH product, will it drive up costs, and what are the new technologies on the horizon, such as algae, and what are the costs?

Sen. Barnes brings his knowledge to the commission from his membership on the senate's energy committee.

Barklay Jackson, formerly with the PUC and now with the nonprofit Green Start, wants to promote the use and viability of biodiesel, convince home heating companies to offer biodiesel, and educate the public on its benefits.

Scott Bryer from the Dept of Safety and responsible for licensing biodiesel in NH, is concerned about how highway tax will be paid, distribution of biodiesel, how to license distributors and producers, and rebates.

Becky Ohler of DES and its alternative fuels program, expressed concerns about ensuring a sustainable method of producing biodiesel in NH, the quality of the fuel and its emission characteristics, and consumer education. [*she said something about "single method" but I didn't get it*]

Dick Uncles from the Dept of Agriculture is concerned about ample acreage in the state, cost values, and unrealistic expectations since the farmland available may not be sufficient in NH. He described two categories of crops: specialty (more labor intensive, more expensive) and commodity (more machine intensive, less expensive). He said agricultural crops is the best use of cropland, followed by livestock, and noted that many farmers are themselves using biofuels in their farming practice.

Melinda Treadwell of Keene State and formerly with NH's air toxics program, conducts research in petroleum emissions and is currently looking at B100 fuel production. She sees an opportunity to develop fuel guidelines in NH that echo federal guidelines and suggested we emphasize low-potency blends to limit particulate emissions, and added that we should not end up with several kinds of biodiesel, as that would be too difficult for distributors. She also wants to prevent disincentives.

Becky Ohler mentioned that ASTM is pushing for specs for B-20 grade biodiesel.

Rep. Borden said the goal should be reduction of demand for *high emission fuel*???, we should seek a low-potency brand and that NH can have a lower potency product than ASTM guidelines.

The next meeting of the commission is scheduled for Thursday, August 16th at 10:00 AM room 304 in the LOB.

